

# TARGETED REGULATION OF LICENSED PREMISES IN A CITY ENTERTAINMENT PRECINCT: IMPACT ON ASSAULTS, STREET OFFENCES AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT PRESENTATIONS

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**Background** Licensed premises in entertainment precincts are associated with higher levels of alcohol-related harm. In 2008, additional licensing conditions were imposed on a number of hotels in the main entertainment precinct of Newcastle, NSW (Australia). These included reduced trading hours, lock-outs, drink restrictions and additional Responsible Service of Alcohol strategies.

**Aims/Objectives/Purpose** The aim of this study was to determine the impact of the conditions on night-time assaults, street offences and assault-related injury emergency department presentations 3 years post-intervention.

**Methods** Two separate analyses were undertaken:

1. Separate binomial regression analyses were undertaken to assess changes over time in police attended incidents (night-time non-domestic assaults and street offenses) in the study area and three comparison areas for 2001 to 2011.
2. A linear regression analysis with linear and quadratic trends was conducted to model changes over time in emergency department presentations (night-time assault related injury)

in four hospitals located within 40 km of the main entertainment precinct for 2001 to 2011.

**Results/Outcome** In the 3 years following the implementation of additional licensing conditions in Newcastle, the study found a significant:

- 28% to 37% relative reduction in night-time non-domestic assaults relative to three comparison areas.
- 44% to 70% relative reduction in night-time street offences relative to three comparison areas.
- 26% reduction in night-time assault-related injury emergency department presentations.

**Significance/Contribution to the Field** The reduction in alcohol-related harm following the introduction of the conditions and the longevity of such improvements provide strong evidence for the imposition of such licensing conditions.